

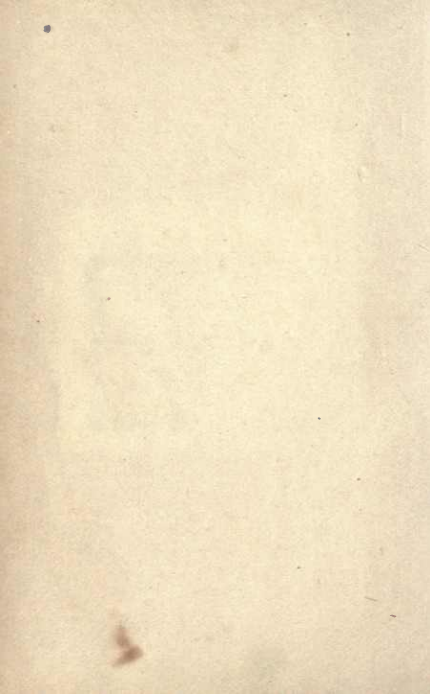
CHILDREN'S BOOK
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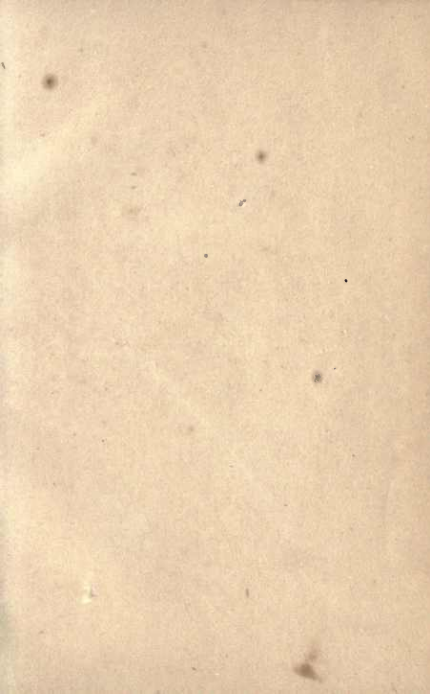
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CHARLIE GRANT;

OR,

HOW TO DO RIGHT.

A STORY FOR THE NURSERY.

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CHARLIE GRANT;

OR,

HOW TO DO RIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

“I WON’T try to be good any more, because it’s of no use,” said Charlie Grant, passionately, as he threw down his playthings and marched out of the nursery.

At the nursery-door, however, he met his cousin Adelaide, and she tried to stop the little fellow; but he looked very rueful, and would not be held: so she let him go on for a few steps, and then called to him, kindly,—

“Charlie, I am going into the summer-house. Won’t you come?”

He stopped, but did not turn round: so Adelaide ventured to approach him, and, putting her hands on his shoulders, stooped down to get a peep at his face. It was very tearful, and he still sobbed a good deal. Adelaide kneeled down and put her arm round him.

“What is the matter, Charlie?”

The face and voice were very kind, and little Charlie could not withstand them.

“I wanted to be a good boy,” he said, still sobbing, “and I tried; but Minnie was cross, and wanted all my toys,—and nurse would not give me my picture-book,—and—and——”

“Well, Charlie, and what?”

“And Minnie tried to get my horse and cart,—and we broke the horse’s bridle,—and nurse took it away, and

said I was a very naughty boy." Poor Charlie's tears began to flow afresh at the dismal recital of his morning's troubles.

"Well," said Adelaide, rising and taking his hand, "suppose we don't talk any more about it at present. Go and wait for me in the summer-house, and when I have spoken to nurse, I will come."

Charlie dried his tears, and Adelaide went into the nursery for his hat. She smoothed his hair, and kissed him before putting it on; and the little fellow felt more comfortable as he went rather slowly down-stairs, and through the hall-door into the sunny garden. He had not to wait long before Adelaide joined him: she had her work-basket in her hand, and a number of flowers covered the top of it.

"See, Charlie! I want these flowers

cut to the right length for the drawing-room flower-glass. Can you do it, do you think?"

"Yes," said Charlie, "if I had the glass."

"I am going back for the glass," said Adelaide, as she placed the basket on the summer-house table.

"I can go for it," said Charlie.

"Will you bring it very carefully?"

"Yes: I will hold it with both my hands."

On this condition Adelaide acquiesced, and, sitting down, took out her work. In about two minutes Charlie was back again, gravely holding the flower-glass in both his hands.

"The scissors, please," he said, coming up to her, after the glass had been safely deposited upon the seat,—for the table was decidedly too high for little Charlie's convenience. She gave him

the scissors and the flowers, which with a thoughtful face he conveyed to the seat, and in silence began his work.

Presently, however, he began to talk, —partly to himself, partly to the flowers, and partly to Adelaide.

“The roses have all *very* long stalks. I wonder why they were cut so long?—Stop, sir, you haven’t to go in yet.—These geraniums must go in first, and then this moss-rose. Oh, what a beauty! Look!”

He held up the beautiful flower to Adelaide’s admiring eyes.

“*I* think it is the prettiest among them. What do you say?” he continued, as the flower was very carefully placed in the glass.

“Perhaps it is,” said she. “Stay, though: is there not a white moss-rose among them?”

“Yes,” said Charlie, picking it out

and holding it up for inspection; "but the red one is the nicest, decidedly: I'll put them both together now, and then you'll see." And the red rose was carefully retaken from the glass, and with the white one brought before Adelaide's eyes to be decided upon.

"Don't you think the red one is?"

"Why, indeed, Charlie," said Adelaide, smiling, "it is difficult to say; but I am afraid the white one is my favourite."

The question being thus settled, Charlie returned to his glass and silently deposited therein the rival beauties.

"Why do you like the white one best?" he asked, after a short pause. "They are both the same shape; they both have moss round them; they are both sweet: there is only the colour; and I do think red is prettier than

white. Are you sure you like the white one best?"

"I think I do," said Adelaide, looking again at it: "it is so pure."

Charlie seemed to be pondering this reply, for he finished his task in silence. Having arranged the flowers to the best of his skill, he carried them to Adelaide for approval, and then, with a satisfied little sigh, placed them upon the table; after which he rested his little round arms upon Adelaide's lap and watched the quick movement of her crochet-needle. She went on with her work for a little while, and then laid it down and lifted Charlie into her lap.

"I want to talk to you a little, Charlie, about this morning; for I think it is such a pity that a little boy should say 'he won't try to be good any more.'"

Charlie's countenance rather fell, and he began to play with the chain round Adelaide's neck.

"I hope, Charlie, that you *will* try, and succeed too."

"I did try," he answered, after a little pause, "this morning; but it was of no use."

"And why did you not succeed, Charlie? Do you know?"

"I *couldn't*," said Charlie.

"But why not?" persisted Adelaide. "You said you wished to be good, and tried to be good: so why could you not?"

"Dear me!" said Charlie, puzzled; "why can't I pull that tree down, or this house? I couldn't be good, when I *couldn't*."

"No, dear Charlie; and that is what I want you to understand," said Adelaide: "you have the power to be

naughty, but not the same power to be good. It is very sad, is it not?"

"Yes," said Charlie. "Why are we so?"

"We are born so, Charlie: we have evil hearts."

"What must we do, then, Alie?"

"We must have our hearts changed," said Adelaide.

"*Changed!* Who can change them?"

"God can."

"Why doesn't he change mine?"

"Have you ever asked him, Charlie?"

"No; but I will."

"But, Charlie," said Adelaide, "God is very holy, and too pure to look on sin. How can we go to him and ask for what we want?"

"I don't know," said Charlie, softly. "Won't he hear us?"

"He is a just God, Charlie; and he has said, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall

die.' Sin is so dreadful in God's sight that the sinner deserves everlasting punishment,—never to be happy!"

"And are we *all* sinners?" asked Charlie, anxiously.

"Yes,—all."

"What must we do, then? Do you know?" said the little boy, looking earnestly up at her.

"I do know, dear Charlie," said Adelaide. And for a few moments she lifted up her heart in prayer to that Saviour of whom she was about to speak.

"You know who Jesus Christ is, Charlie?"

"Yes," said Charlie; "he is the Son of God."

"Well, Charlie, Jesus—the Son of God—came into the world to save sinners. He took our sins upon himself."

And she gave him full time to take

in the blessed truth; while inwardly she prayed that God would bless it to his soul.

"Jesus was nailed to the cross," said Charlie, looking up suddenly. "Was it then?"

"Yes," said Adelaide, solemnly; "he suffered for our sins then."

"And now we *needn't* go," said Charlie, "where we can never be happy."

"Not if we believe in Jesus. He has saved us from it."

"I believe in him, then," said Charlie, quietly. And as he leaned back in Adelaide's arms it seemed to her as if the little face already expressed 'peace in believing.' She was thankful, and an affectionate kiss was pressed on the little round cheek.

"And now," said Charlie, after a few minutes' thoughtful pause, "I *may* ask God to change my heart?"

"Yes, dear: you can ask him any thing in Christ's name."

"I will tell him I believe in Christ, and ask him to pardon all my sins and to change my heart. Shall I?"

"Yes."

"And I *will* try very hard to be good."

"That is right, dear Charlie. May God bless you, and help you, and make you his own dear child!" And, after another warm kiss, little Charlie was carried into the house by Adelaide, with both his little arms round her neck.

CHAPTER II.

BUT Charlie had a great deal to learn. He was quite sincere in believing in Christ; but he did not know what a "fountain of iniquity" the human heart is, nor how much evil he had to contend with. Nevertheless, he had quite resolved to be a Christian. What Adelaide had told him of the Saviour who suffered in our stead had sunk deep into his heart; and, young as he was, he partly understood that, to be God's dear child in Christ Jesus, he must have his heart entirely changed and renewed.

On the evening of the day on which he and Adelaide had their conversation in the summer-house, it happened that she took a long walk into the country

with Mr. Grant; and it was past Charlie's bedtime when they returned. Adelaide, however, paid a visit to the nursery directly, and was glad to find that the children had been allowed to sit up rather later than usual. The nurse was rocking little Minnie to sleep, and Charlie, though ready for bed, was sitting in his little rocking-chair, wrapped up in a little blue cloak, apparently watching the process of his little sister's being put to sleep. He looked very much pleased, however, when Adelaide entered, and his little chair was exchanged for her lap in a very short time.

"You are rather late, dear, in going to bed, are you not?" said Adelaide, kissing him.

"Yes: nurse was busy," said Charlie; "and I was very glad," he continued, kneeling upon her lap, and

whispering in her ear,—“because I wanted you to come in before I said my prayers.” She gave him another kiss, after which he settled himself with a resigned little face, as if Minnie’s going to sleep were a thing to be patiently waited for. He did not care, besides, so long as he was in Adelaide’s arms, with her cheek against his little curly head and her lips sometimes pressed gently on his forehead.

Janet rocked away for some time; and the twilight was nearly gone before she could pronounce certainly that the little lady was asleep. By-and-by, however, this was an established fact; and, as Adelaide engaged to see Charlie into bed, Janet went down-stairs.

“Now,” said Charlie, directly, “I have that to ask, you know.”

“What are you going to ask, dear Charlie?” said Adelaide.

"That God will change my heart," he answered, clearly, "so that I may be good."

"Yes, dear," said Adelaide, gently; and Charlie thought there were tears in her eyes as she lifted him from her lap. He kneeled down with his little hands folded on her knee, and Adelaide bent her head too.

"What must I say?" said Charlie, softly, looking up at her.

"First, you must thank God for his great love in sending his Son into the world to save sinners," said Adelaide, solemnly.

But Charlie still paused, as if in doubt what words to use.

"Shall I teach you a little prayer?" said Adelaide, gently; "and you shall say it after me."

"Yes," he said, looking gladly up. So she took his little hands in her's,

and, in a voice which was touching in its childlike solemnity and simple earnestness, little Charlie prayed :—

“O Lord God Almighty, I thank thee for thy great love in sending thy Son Jesus Christ into this world to save sinners. I pray that my sins may all be pardoned for Christ’s sake, and that thy Holy Spirit may make my sinful heart entirely new, so that I may follow thee as thy dear child in Christ Jesus during my life on earth, and may dwell with thee forever in heaven. O heavenly Father, hear and grant my prayer for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.”

The Lord’s Prayer was added; and then the little boy was lifted gently into Adelaide’s lap; and there was no doubt about her tears this time, as, with her arms wound round him, she kissed him very tenderly.

“Why do you cry? Do you think God has not heard my prayer?”

“Oh, no! I do not doubt that he has heard, and will grant, your prayer. I will tell you something that Jesus said when he was on earth, Charlie.”

“What?” said Charlie.

“He said, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.’”

“Did he?” said Charlie. “But I can’t go to him yet,—not till I die.”

“Yes, dear, you can. We go to Jesus when we believe in him: when the Bible tells us to come to Jesus, it means that we are to believe in him and take him for our Saviour.”

“Oh, then, I can go to him that way,” said Charlie. “How good it was in him to mention little children! wasn’t it? How good he was! Wasn’t he good to take our sins upon himself?”

“Oh, Charlie! no words can tell how

good he was. We should love him best of all: should we not, Charlie?"

"Yes," he answered; "and I do love him."

"And you must ask him to make you love him far more; and, when you find it hard to do right, you must always go to God, and ask for help in Christ's name, all your life through."

Charlie promised; and, after another kiss, he was very kindly laid into bed, and tucked up warm, before Adelaide left him; and when she came gently in much later in the evening, both children were wrapped in peaceful slumbers.

It will easily be believed that little Charlie was not forgotten in Adelaide's prayers that night. Most earnest was her petition that the good seed, which she really hoped had been sown, might take deep root, and in due time bring forth fruit a hundredfold.

Early the next morning little Charlie had his first Bible-lesson; and a happy half-hour it was to him, as, seated on Adelaide's lap by her open window, she read to him, and made him read, those simple and glorious truths upon which the Christian religion is founded. She did not, however, tire him,—well knowing that the attention of a little boy of six or seven years old must not be expected to last very long. His mind had taken deep hold of the great truth that Jesus had suffered that he might redeem sinners from death; and, resting upon this, other truths appeared to be more easily understood and received by him. In the present lesson it was Adelaide's endeavour to make him clearly understand the great doctrine of the fall of man.

“You know who Adam and Eve were; do you not, Charlie?” she said,

after he had read some texts relating to the "Lamb of God."

"Yes," said Charlie,—“the first people that ever lived.”

“The first people that God made,—yes. Well, Charlie, Adam and Eve were not sinful when they were first made, you know: they were *made* good. Listen to what the Bible says:—‘And God saw every thing that he had made; and behold, it was *very good*.’ Adam and Eve were made very good,—not sinful at all.”

“But they didn’t keep good,” said Charlie. “I read about it in my picture-Bible.”

“They did not,” said Adelaide. “God placed them in the beautiful garden of Eden, and commanded them not to eat the fruit of one of the trees, which grew in the midst of the garden.” And she read to him the texts.

"But they did eat it," said Charlie.

"Yes. Satan tempted Eve, and she took the fruit and gave it to Adam."

"Tell me about Satan," said Charlie, looking puzzled.

"He is a wicked spirit," said Adelaide, "who was cast out of heaven; and he wishes to make others as sinful and unhappy as himself."

"And he tempted Eve. Well, what happened after they did what God told them not to do?"

"They lost their goodness, Charlie, and became sinful; and no one since has been born as Adam and Eve were at first."

Charlie looked very thoughtful at this; and so did Adelaide, for she was thinking how she could make him understand how deeply depraved is the nature which we inherit.

"Now, Charlie," she continued, after

a short pause, and Charlie had looked at her as if for something more, "it is very important that we should know how very sinful we are *by nature*,—that is, before God has changed our hearts. In the first place, the Bible tells us that we have 'a darkened understanding' about God and heavenly things." And she read to him, "*Having the understanding darkened.*" (Eph. iv. 18.)

Charlie looked as if he partly understood; but he waited for Adelaide to speak again.

"You know, Charlie," she continued, (thankful to see him so attentive,) "we can understand *other* things with the understanding that we are born with; but about God and heavenly things we are *in the dark*—until God enlightens us."

"Yes," he answered.

"But, besides being in this 'dark-

ened' state, Charlie, we are by nature at 'enmity' with God." And again she read, "The carnal mind [that is, the natural mind,—the mind that we are born with] is enmity against God." (Rom. viii. 7.) "It does not like to think of God; it does not like his law or his ways; it is at *enmity* with him."

Charlie looked at her as if he thought we were indeed fallen.

"And this is not all," continued Adelaide. "The Bible tells us that our hearts are by nature 'desperately wicked.'" And she read Jeremiah xvii. 9. "And you know, Charlie, that in consequence of this evil nature we have done wrong thousands and thousands of times. God's law is 'holy, just and good;' and we break that law whenever we do wrong."

"But we cannot help it," said Char-

lie. "How can we, when we are born wicked?"

"We are born in sin, certainly, Charlie; but God's law remains the same. Is it not right that the great God, who is perfectly wise, holy and just, should require his creatures to be perfectly obedient to his will?"

"Yes," he said:—"only we can't be."

"That is true, dear: we cannot, indeed, as you found yesterday morning; and we must all have been lost, Charlie, but for God's great mercy. We were 'without strength,' as the Bible says, to save ourselves; and we must have suffered what we deserved but for One,—you know who, Charlie?"

"JESUS," said Charlie, earnestly.

"Jesus bore our sins and suffered the punishment due to them," said Adelaide.

"Find me some texts about that," said Charlie: "I want to read them."

He gave her the Bible, and put his arm round her neck during the search.

"They are they which testify of me," thought Adelaide, as she turned over the leaves of the precious volume. The first text she found was in Isaiah liii. "Here is one, Charlie:—'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. *And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*' Iniquity means sin, you know; all our sin was laid upon him."

"Yes," said Charlie. "Put me a mark in. Can you find another?"

"Yes," she answered, turning to 1 Peter ii. 24 and iii. 18:—"His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' 'Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God.' Must I put a mark in at those, Charlie?"

"Yes," said Charlie,—*"in both."*

“And now, Charlie, you have had enough for your first lesson. We shall have many more, I hope; and, though it is very sad to learn that we have so evil a nature, it is very sweet to know that we have a Saviour who suffered for us and that we may have that evil nature changed. Is it not, dear Charlie?”

“Yes,” said Charlie, as he kneeled upon her lap, that he might with more convenience give her several kisses.

“Oh, little Charlie, you are a happy little boy, if you have really set out in the narrow way!”

“The narrow way!” said Charlie, looking up inquiringly.

“The way that leads to heaven is the narrow way, Charlie.” But, before any more could be said, nurse knocked at the door to say that breakfast was ready.

CHAPTER III.

OUR young readers may perhaps like to know something more about Charlie's home and parents; and they will be sorry for him when they hear that his mother had died very soon after the birth of his little sister Minnie, so that he could remember but little of her. She had always been in a weak state of health, and was often from home for change of air; and on this account little Charlie's recollections of her were less distinct than they might otherwise have been.

His father was a merchant, and a very successful one; but his business kept him very closely, and he had not much time to spend with his little son

and daughter, though, when it could be had, there were few things he enjoyed more than a good game of romps with Charlie, or to ride his bright little Minnie on his knee. Charlie, too, he would take between his knees to gaze at. For he had his mother's face in miniature, the same very fair complexion; though in Charlie's case it was enlivened by roses as bright as ever bloomed on a little boy's cheek. He had his mother's dark-blue eyes, too, and long eyelashes; and his father used to tell him that he must be the little boy in a song of Adelaide's, who had "each tress turned to gold" by the sun's "earliest ray,"—he had such sunny curls.

Little Minnie was quite different. She was like her father, and a perfect little brunette, with a dark, straight little face; the short curls on her baby head were almost as black as ebony

already; and her eyes, when she laughed and crowed, (as she very often did,) danced and sparkled in a way which always made Charlie laugh heartily in concert.

They lived in a large, handsome house, surrounded on three sides by spacious and well-kept grounds. The house, which was called "Elmwood," was built upon an eminence; and the orchard behind led out upon a declivity, which was thickly wooded, chiefly by magnificent old elm-trees, intermixed with the beautiful silver birch. There was a river at the bottom of this wood; and Charlie often thought that nothing could be pleasanter than to hear its murmuring sound on a bright summer day, when the sky was as blue as possible, making the water blue too, and the birds sung, and the birch-trees whispered in the summer breeze.

Adelaide, as we have said, was Charlie's cousin; and she had come to Elmwood to spend the summer with her uncle and his motherless little ones. Charlie was very shy of her at first; but when this was over he made up his mind that she was very kind and good, and that he liked her *very* much; and he wished, he said, that his father would not have dinner-parties so often, because Adelaide had to go and stay down-stairs with the company, when he wanted her in the nursery; and it was too bad, he thought, that when his father had no parties at home he should often take Adelaide away in the carriage to dine somewhere else.

Occasionally, however, he had very nice times, when Adelaide was left alone, and sent for Charlie into the library to spend the evening with her. Happy enough he certainly was then,

with a large book of beautiful pictures (which could never on any account be taken into the nursery) on a chair by Adelaide's side, and she close at hand, quite ready to look and admire whenever she was called upon. Charlie had learned to "turn over" very carefully, and knew that he must not put his fingers on the prints: so that Adelaide could write or crochet, or do any other kind of work, without having to watch him all the time.

It was on one of these happy evenings that little Charlie, instead of looking at pictures, asked Adelaide for another Bible-lesson; and very willingly was the request granted. She had been purposely waiting to see whether it would be his own desire to learn more; and she wished, besides, that he should have abundant time to think well upon what he already knew. And this he

seemed to have done; for he could answer clearly all her questions on the fall of our first parents and on the sinful nature which we inherit from them. He had also learned by heart, from his own little Bible, the verses which Adelaide had found for him respecting the Saviour who died that we might live.

He had now to learn that Jesus not only suffered for our disobedience, but obeyed the law which we have broken, thus working out for us a perfect righteousness.

"You know, Charlie," said Adelaide, when he had brought his little Bible and settled himself on her lap, "we learned last time that because of our sinful nature we cannot keep God's law perfectly nor do his will."

"Yes," said Charlie, decidedly.

"And that Jesus bore our sins."

"Yes."

“Well, now, Charlie,” continued Adelaide, speaking slowly and distinctly, “Jesus, you know, *could* keep God’s law, and did keep it: he was tempted as we are; but he *never* sinned.”

“Never?” said Charlie. “But he hadn’t our bad nature: he was the Son of God.”

“Yes, Charlie; but he was man as well as God, and *like* man in every thing but this. Listen to what the Bible says:—‘He was in all points tempted like as we are, but *without sin*.’

“Christ kept the law perfectly; and we become partakers of his perfect righteousness when we believe in him.”

“Do we?” said Charlie, with astonishment.

“Can you understand this text, Charlie? ‘As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by

the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'” (Rom. v. 19.)

“Yes,” said Charlie. “Oh! Jesus has done *every thing* for us!”

“That is true indeed, dear Charlie: it is a full and free salvation. God will pardon our sins for Christ’s sake. Do you understand this?”

“Yes.”

“But,” said Adelaide, earnestly, almost afraid of his confidence, “you must remember that it is only *real* and *true* believers in Christ who have these great blessings.”

“Is it not difficult to *believe*?” said Charlie, looking up at her.

“No, dear,—not if God teaches us and helps us; but faith is God’s gift.”

“Faith?” said Charlie.

“Yes: faith means belief; and it is the gift of God.”

“I think he has given it to me, then;

for I am sure I believe all you have told me about Jesus."

Adelaide could not disturb so simple and child-like a reception of the "glad tidings of great joy." She folded the little boy in her arms and thought of the words, "Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

"And do you think," she said, after a little pause, "that God has given you repentance too, Charlie?"

"What is that?" he asked.

"Does it grieve you to know that you have so sinful a nature? And are you sorry when you do wrong?"

"I have been sorrier since I knew about Jesus," said Charlie, softly.

"That is well," said Adelaide; "and you must ask God to soften your heart, that you may be more and more sorry.

I hope you will learn to hate sin. God hates it, and every Christian must."

"Yes; I know it."

"And now, dear, I think we should begin to read the Bible regularly. I do not mean that we shall not go on with these lessons about certain truths; but we will choose some part to read through. Will you come to me every morning before breakfast, and I will teach you some little hymns too, if you like?"

Charlie gladly promised; and we can assure our young readers that he never failed to be at Adelaide's door, with his little Bible in his hand, at the time appointed.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR young readers have not been told that Charlie had a governess, who used to come to teach him two hours every morning. Miss Stanley had taken great pains with her little pupil, who had very good abilities; and he had made very fair progress for so young a student. He could read, really very well; and his writing and spelling were becoming every day more creditable: in geography and history he was as forward as most little boys of his age; and his sums were accomplished with less and less difficulty every day.

But one unhappy morning little Charlie got into sad trouble during lesson-hours. In the first place, he had got up in a very cross humour,

because little Minnie had been dressed before he was,—a proceeding against which he always loudly protested.

“What a shame, nurse!” he said, ruefully, sitting up in his crib and rubbing his eyes.

“My dear, you were fast asleep,” said Janet, deprecatingly, “and I thought it better not to wake you, for you were rather slow in getting to sleep last night. You will soon be dressed.”

But Charlie would not be pacified, and the dressing was a very gloomy affair. When it was completed, he kneeled down to say his prayers, as usual; but his heart was full of cross feelings, and he could not *wish* for what he asked at all. It was not yet time to go to Adelaide’s room, and Charlie did not feel inclined to employ himself, as he usually did, with looking at his Bible picture-book, or learning some of

his favourite texts. So he went to the window-seat, and, resting his elbows upon it, took a silent survey of the scene without.

It ought to have put him into a good humour to see how brightly the sun was shining; how blue the sky was; how fresh and beautiful the trees looked; how the dew-drops on the grass sparkled like so many diamonds; and how the birds shook their wings, and sung to each other as if for very joy that every thing was so beautiful. And he did think for a little while that God had given sinners a beautiful world; and for a moment, too, it crossed his mind whether he ought not to try and get the better of his cross feelings. But he would not listen to the faithful warnings of conscience, and began to think of something else.

It was near eight o'clock, and Charlie

was beginning to feel some doubts as to whether he should like his reading with Adelaide as much as usual, when her bell rang, and the next minute Mary came to say that "Master Charlie was not to go this morning; but Miss Adelaide hoped that he would read his chapter by himself, and he should read it with her another time."

"Is she sick?" asked Charlie, looking round from the window-seat.

"Not very," said Mary; "but she has a headache, and I have persuaded her to lie still for a little while. She sends her love to you."

Nurse looked at Charlie in the hope that this kind message would dispel his ill humour; but he only turned back to the window and gazed out as before.

"Now, Charlie," said the nurse, kindly, after a few minutes had passed, "had you not better read your chapter before

breakfast? because you know you have your copy and sum to do for Miss Stanley after."

Charlie was silent for a few moments longer, and did not change his position; but by-and-by he went slowly for his Bible, which he brought back to the window-seat, where he sat down and began to read. The chapter was read through, and Charlie was much interested in it for it; was the twenty-second of Genesis,—that beautiful story of Abraham's faith when commanded to offer up his son Isaac. Strange to say, however, little Charlie, when he had finished reading, was not yet willing to part with his ill humour, or rather he made no effort to overcome it. He was quite sullen all breakfast-time, and would not smile at all at little Minnie's pleasant prattle.

After breakfast he was ready to go

out; for it was Mr. Grant's desire that he should always run about in the garden for a quarter of an hour before beginning his lessons. Generally he liked this quarter of an hour very much, and would come in as rosy as a ripe apple, after a good play with his hoop or ball. This morning, however, he took neither, but sauntered about the garden, a very discontented and uncomfortable little boy indeed. He knew quite well that he was not doing right, and for a moment was half inclined to yield to his better feelings and try to shake off his ill humour; and, if he had only done so, he might have been a happy little boy for the remainder of the day.

Dear readers, never do as Charlie did. Never nurse a wrong feeling. Never give way to wrong tempers. Conquer them, and do not let them

conquer *you*; and, oh, remember that we cannot conquer sin without God's help, and that we must ask for it in Christ's name. "Ask, and ye shall receive." Little Charlie knew this; but he did not act upon it. He let sin have its way and *reign*; and there is no master so hard, so tyrannical, as sin, and no slavery so bitter, so cruel, as the slavery of sin.

When Charlie came in-doors again, he had his copy to write, and his sum to do for Miss Stanley; but he was in no humour to take pains, and the copy was very badly done indeed,—scrawled and blotted, like no other page in the book. The sum he scarcely tried to do; and, what was worse, he got almost into a passion because his pencil had no point; and when Janet offered to sharpen it for him he only shook his little shoulders and made no answer.

Nurse was of course very sorry to see him so naughty, and she was surprised, too; for he had been so much better lately, since Adelaide's kind teaching.

"Oh, Charlie!" she said, seeing how little pains he was taking with his sum, "I am afraid you are doing it very carelessly, and Miss Stanley will be quite displeased with you."

"Never you mind," said Charlie, knitting his little brows over the slate: "you are not Miss Stanley. It is your fault, besides."

"My fault?" said nurse. "Oh, Charlie, you are a naughty boy this morning."

"Of course it's your fault," said the little boy, ruefully. "I should have been quite in a good humour if you had waked me first. But I'll take care another morning. I *will* be up first!"

After this reply, Janet thought it

wiser to say no more: so she only smoothed the little boy's hair, and made him ready to go to Miss Stanley, who was seen coming up the garden-walk.

Charlie got his books and slate; and, without a word to the nurse or little Minnie, (who seemed to be gravely wondering what made the difference in Charlie,) he betook himself to the pleasant little room where Miss Stanley was waiting for him.

She was busy looking at a new geography when he entered: so she only held out her hand rather absently, without observing that her little pupil's face was less bright than usual. Very soon, however, she laid the book aside, and took up the copy-book which Charlie had laid down by her. Very much surprised she was when the disfigured page was opened.

“Oh, Charlie! Charlie! what a copy!

My dear child, what have you been about?" And now for the first time she looked at the little boy, and saw that something had gone wrong with him.

"I am afraid you have taken no pains at all, Charlie. Come and look at it. See how the page is spoiled! Did you write it to-day?"

"Yes," said Charlie.

"Well, it is very badly done, I am sorry to say," said Miss Stanley; "and they have been so much better, too, lately," she continued, turning back a page or two. "I thought you were quite improved; but this is as bad or worse than the very first. I hope you will never bring me such a copy again, Charlie."

But Charlie would make no acknowledgments of carelessness, and no promises of amendment. He had given

way to ill humour until he was in a very naughty temper indeed.

Miss Stanley looked grave. "Well, give me your sum, Charlie. I hope you have taken more pains with that."

He gave her the slate,—which she had only to glance at to be convinced that the sum had fared no better than the copy.

"Oh, Charlie! I am sorry you have been so careless. It is a great pity. You will be more careful in future, I hope?"

No: little Charlie would make no such promise.

"Well," said Miss Stanley, quietly, "we must go on with our lessons, Charlie; but I would much rather that you would tell me first that you know you have been careless and that you are sorry for it."

It was of no use, however. The

little boy was quite obstinate, and would not answer one word. Miss Stanley said no more, but went on with his lessons, in the hope that before the two hours were over he would be tired of his ill humour and be willing to make the required concession.

In the course of the morning Adelaide looked in. "Good-morning, Miss Stanley. Well, Charlie!"

Charlie looked round. "Are you better?"

"Yes, dear; but I am going out with your father, and I am afraid it will be late when we return. How do lessons get on, Miss Stanley?"

"*Pretty* well, Miss Leslie, thank you," said Miss Stanley, rather hesitatingly.

Adelaide shut the door without saying any more. She saw that all was not right, but thought it better to leave the matter to Miss Stanley, to whose

judgment she could confidently trust. The carriage was at the door, besides, and Mr. Grant was much too punctual a person to be kept waiting.

"Now, Charlie," said Miss Stanley, kindly, when the lessons were concluded, "do tell me before I go that you are sorry you took so little pains with your copy and sum, and that it shall not happen again."

"I'm not going to tell you," said Charlie, taking up his slate-pencil and beginning to scribble all over his slate.

"I can give you no marks, then," said Miss Stanley; "and you have lost none for a good while now. Oh, Charlie! think better of it!"

But no; Charlie only hung his little head on one side and went on scribbling. He was rather alarmed, though, at the prospect of losing his marks; for he was very anxious to get the full num-

ber by his birthday, which he had calculated he would do if he only lost *one* before that day. Miss Stanley usually gave him two good marks,—one for good conduct during lesson-hours, and another for well-prepared lessons.

“Remember, Charlie,” she said, “that you will not get your prize on your birthday, as you said you wished to do, if you lose *two* marks.”

“I know that,” said the little boy.

“Well, then, don’t be so silly and so naughty, Charlie. I shall be quite sorry not to give them to you. Think, now, while I get ready.”

But Charlie would not think; and while Miss Stanley was putting on her bonnet and shawl he made great long lines from one end of his slate to the other.

“Now I must go, Charlie,” she said;

"but I will give you your marks first if you will let me."

"You can if you like," said Charlie, writing away.

"No; it depends upon you. I cannot give you a mark for good conduct except you acknowledge that you have behaved ill and that you are sorry for it."

Charlie was silent.

"Well, I must not wait any longer. I can only hope that you will be sorry to-morrow, Charlie. Good-by."

"Good-by," he answered, almost in a whisper.

He was very uncomfortable, though, when Miss Stanley was gone,—so much so that he almost thought of running after her. He went to the window to see if she was out of sight. She was nearly at the gate. Should he call to her from the window? No: it was too

late. She was opening the gate; and now she was out of sight. Poor Charlie! He did not know what to do now. He felt very unhappy. It was so beautiful, too, out-of-doors; the sky was so blue, and every thing looked so bright and peaceful. Such a soft, sweet air came in his face as he stood at the open window, and the birds flew about so merrily. There was one particular thrush, which Charlie had often watched singing in a tree near; and there it was now, pouring forth such an incessant song,—

“As if to heave

The too-much weight of music from its heart
And float it up the air.”

But these sweet sights and sounds brought no pleasure to poor Charlie this morning: their contrast to his own ruffled and self-accusing feelings quite prevented it.

Nurse now came in with his hat in her hand, and cast a very kind look of inquiry upon the little figure at the window. She asked no questions, however, but drew her own conclusions from the expression which she saw as she tied on the hat.

"You had better take your hoop, Charles," she said, when he was ready to go, "and have a good run in the garden before dinner. In the afternoon we are to walk to the farm for some eggs."

"I don't want to go to the farm," said Charlie, gloomily.

"But your father wishes you to go. He left word I was to take you both."

Charlie said no more, but walked silently out of the room, and downstairs into the garden. Never had his little heart been so heavy; never before had the song of birds and the hum of

insects been so unwelcome and uncheering a sound. Never before had the bright sunshine and summer breeze brought no gladness along with them.

Yes! even a little child may feel that "the way of transgressors is hard."

CHAPTER V.

THE afternoon came, and with it the walk to Elmwood Farm, where lived a tenant of Mr. Grant. Mr. Berridge was often visited by Janet and the children, carrying with them a basket to be filled with fresh eggs.

There were so many things to attract his attention during the walk and at the farm that little Charlie after a time partly forgot his morning's troubles, and was almost as bright and full of glee as ever.

Mrs. Berridge, who was a great favourite with Charlie, took him with her to look for eggs, and afterwards showed him many other farm-yard wonders, with which he was greatly

interested and delighted. Some beautiful fan-tail pigeons especially pleased him.

“Oh! how *very* pretty they are!” he said, admiringly. “Mrs. Berridge, they are prettier than the chickens a thousand times. How white their feathers are! I wish——”

“What do you wish?” said Mrs. Berridge, as she scattered some corn for the pigeons.

“I was going to say I wish I had some of my own,” said Charlie.

“Well, you shall have two of them, if they will stay with you and your father will let you keep them.”

“Oh, yes!” said Charlie, delighted. “I am sure he will let me keep them. And cousin is very fond of pigeons, too; for one day when some flew over our house she said she would be glad if we had some.”

“Oh, then, I shall be delighted to give you two of these,” said Mrs. Berridge. “But you must have a house made ready first.”

“Yes,” said Charlie: “I must speak to father about it,—perhaps to-night. Oh, Mrs. Berridge! The geese are coming! Mrs. Berridge! Mrs. Berridge! They’ll fly at me! I am sure they will!” And, as he spoke, the farm-yard gate opened, and admitted a formidable troop of geese, who came on screaming and hissing in a way which Charlie particularly disliked.

Mrs. Berridge turned round from the hen-coop she was fastening up, and effectually quieted Charlie’s fears by taking him up in her arms; and in these safe quarters he watched with an interested face the passage of his noisy enemies.

“What a screaming they make,

stretching out their necks!" said Charlie. "I don't like them at all."

"Don't you like to see them in the water?" said Mrs. Berridge, as she carried the little boy towards the house, where nurse was seen standing awaiting their return.

"Oh, yes, I do," said Charlie. "You know the wood behind our house, don't you, Mrs. Berridge, with a brook at the bottom of it?"

"Yes, quite well."

"Now, Master Charlie, we must count the eggs." And Charlie was seated on the ground while the eggs were counted into the basket which he carefully held. Nurse then declared that it was quite time they were on their way home; and, after some kind "good-bys," they set off. As she opened the gate, Mrs. Berridge said to Charlie, "I had Miss Stanley here yesterday, Char-

lie; and she said how much you would like the pigeons."

"Did she?" said Charlie.

"Yes. And I said she was to bring you some time to see them. But you must tell her that you have been."

"Yes," said Charlie, in a tone of voice not quite so cheerful as before—for the mention of Miss Stanley's name recalled the sad business of the morning and brought back his old uncomfortable feelings. The walk home was rather saddened. It was a lovely evening, and Charlie was quite capable of appreciating and enjoying summer's manifold beauties. But to-night he almost wished it had not been so beautiful; and much more slowly and thoughtfully than usual he walked along, a good way behind nurse, swinging a little stick about. He began to think of Adelaide, and of all she had taught him. "She

said I was always to pray to God to help me when I found it hard to do right," he said to himself; "but I didn't. I never thought about that."

"Oh! I wish I had! Nurse!" he called. But nurse was singing to his little sister, and did not hear him.

"Nurse!" called Charlie, louder.

"What is it?" she said, turning round.

"Do you know when cousin will be back?"

"About half-past six," she thought.

"What o'clock is it now?"

"A quarter to six, I should think."

"Is there to be any company?"

"I don't know, indeed. But here we are at home! Come, and we'll have our supper."

They went in, and by-and-by supper was brought for the children. Charlie was hungry, and soon ate it up; and, when the things were gone, he stationed

himself at the window, to watch for the return of the carriage.

By-and-by it came. But oh, what a disappointment to Charlie!—There were two young ladies besides Adelaide inside, and a gentleman with Mr. Grant.

“Oh! dear me! dear me!” said Charlie, retreating a little from the window.

“What’s the matter?” said nurse, surprised.

“There are some ladies with cousin in the carriage, and a strange gentleman. Oh, dear! She will have to be with them all the evening! I know she will!”

“Well, that has often happened before,” said nurse, composedly.

“Oh, but I wanted cousin so much to-night! I hope she will come in here.”

In this hope Charlie returned to the window and waited silently for a little while. By-and-by Adelaide’s bell

rang; and Mary passed the nursery-door with a quick step, and in a few minutes repassed again, still more quickly.

Charlie ran out. "Mary!"

"Yes," said Mary, turning round in haste.

"May I go to Adelaide?"

"My dear child," said Mary, "the Miss Erskines are with her." She moved on quickly; and Charlie re-entered the nursery with a disappointed face.

"Never mind," said nurse, kindly. "Come and play at something. Here are your bricks: come and build a castle."

"No," said Charlie, passing on to the window-seat and resting his little arms upon it. "I wish she *would* come in!" he said, impatiently.

Adelaide would have come if she could, for Charlie was in her thoughts all the time the Miss Erskines were

talking to her; but twilight came on, and little Charlie's bedtime was approaching, when the maid came to say that Mr. Grant had sent for him to go down into the drawing-room.

"Oh, I don't want to go," said Charlie.

"But he must go," said the maid, turning to Janet. "What shall I say to Mr. Grant?"

"Say!" said Charlie. "Say I didn't want to come."

"Well," said nurse, "he has had a long walk, and perhaps he had better go to bed: it's about his time."

The maid disappeared; and, whatever the message was which she sent into the dining-room, it was accepted by Mr. Grant, for she did not return to the nursery; and in the course of half an hour Charlie was in bed.

But, poor fellow! he could not go to sleep as usual; and nurse, who had

lighted a candle and sat down to work, cast some rather anxious glances towards the crib and its restless occupant.

"Nurse!" he said, presently,—and the voice sounded as if he had been crying,—
—"I wish cousin would come!"

"Well, do not cry," said nurse, soothingly. "She would come if she had time."

"But I want her very much," said poor Charlie, crying still more. "Do go for her, nurse!"

"How can I? Come, come; try and go to sleep."

But sleep was out of the question. Charlie was now sobbing rather violently.

"Well, stop crying, then, and I'll go; but stop first."

So little Charlie endeavoured to quiet his sobs; and nurse, with a perplexed face, went in search of Adelaide.

She was at the piano-forte, with the two young ladies on each side of her.

"Miss Adelaide," said nurse, rather hesitatingly, "Charlie would be glad to see you for a few minutes." Adelaide looked at her two companions, who, however, insisted upon her going immediately.

Poor Charlie, meanwhile, was sitting up in his little crib, still sobbing at intervals. Very soon, however, he heard Adelaide's light step coming along the passage, and the next moment she entered the nursery.

One glance at her kind face was quite enough for Charlie; and one glance at the tearful little boy was quite enough also for Adelaide: she came quickly up to him and put her arms kindly round him.

"What is the matter, child? Oh, hush! do not cry so."

"I have been very naughty to-day; and——"

"And is it that which makes you so unhappy?" said Adelaide.

"Yes," sobbed the little boy.

"Then you are very sorry for it, Charlie?"

"Yes, I am."

"Well, then," said Adelaide, "I do not think you need be so unhappy any more. Ask God to forgive you, in Christ's name, and be assured he will. Have you forgotten that Christ died for our sins and that we may obtain forgiveness through him?"

"No," said Charlie, on whose tearful little face hope was beginning to dawn: "but I did not want to think about God at all this morning. I wanted to go on doing wrong."

"Well, dear Charlie, that was very wicked,—of course it was; but I trust, my child, it will be a lesson to you not

to give way to wrong tempers, but to try and conquer them *at first*. I have not heard yet how it was. Come and sit on my lap, and let me smooth your hair, while you tell me." He put his arms round her neck, and she carried him to an arm-chair, where they sat down,—Charlie with his little bare feet against the soft white muslin of Adelaide's evening dress. She took a brush and gently smoothed his hair, as, feeling happier already, he related (with great exactness) the distresses of the morning.

"Well, Charlie," said Adelaide, when he had finished, "there is no doubt you were very naughty;" (Charlie's lip began to tremble again;) "but I hope you are very sorry for it now and wish you had not been so naughty, and you mean to be much more careful in future; do you not?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then, Charlie, I think you have only to ask God to pardon what is past, and to help you to keep your resolution, and you may go to sleep quite a happy little boy again."

The prayer was offered. Simple and childlike though it was, it was *sincere*, and offered in the name of one through whom we may always have "access to the Father." Peace seemed to descend on his troubled conscience; and, although the dew-drop of penitence still glistened on the little boy's cheek, it was fast disappearing in the sunshine of pardon and acceptance. Before putting him again into his little crib, Adelaide kneeled down to fold him close in her arms; and Charlie's were tightly clasped round her neck.

Nothing could be kinder than Adelaide's last kiss; and Charlie did not forget it until he was in "the land of dreams."

CHAPTER VI.

THE next morning, at his usual hour, before breakfast, Charlie was in Adelaide's room, and in his usual seat, on her lap.

When he had finished reading, Adelaide stroked his head thoughtfully for a little while, and then said, "Dear Charlie, you will find it is not always an easy thing to do as Christ would have you do. If you mean to walk in the narrow way, you will often meet with difficulties, though you are but a little boy."

"But," said Charlie, after a short pause, "you told me that Jesus obeyed God's law for us."

"Certainly, Charlie: he *suffered* for

us, and *obeyed* the law which we had broken; and it is only by relying on his obedience, sufferings and death that we can obtain acceptance with God." And here Adelaide paused, in the hope that Charlie would himself see that the point of such acceptance must be holiness of heart and life. He was silent, however,—though he looked very thoughtful.

"But do we need nothing more, Charlie?" asked Adelaide, presently.

"Yes," said Charlie: "we want to be made good *ourselves*."

"Indeed we do," said Adelaide. "If we are accepted with God and made his children by faith in Christ, we want to follow him *as* his children. We are made God's children when we believe in Christ; but if we are God's children we shall do God's will. Do you see, Charlie?"

"I think I do," said Charlie.

"Suppose," said Adelaide, "that the little beggar we saw the other day were to have a very large fortune left him."

"Well?" said Charlie, with some curiosity.

"If he were never educated or brought up to any thing better than what he has been used to,—if he continued to live among the lowest and poorest people, until the time came for him to possess his riches,—he would be quite unfit to use or enjoy them."

"Yes," said Charlie.

"And in the same way," continued Adelaide, "if we hope to possess the rich inheritance of eternal life, we must be prepared for it."

"Oh, yes!" said Charlie, with an understanding smile: "I know now what you mean."

“Certainly,” added Adelaide, “there is this difference between the two cases: in the little boy’s case, he would *have* the riches whether he were made fit to possess them or not; whereas God always *prepares* his children for their inheritance above. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit. He must enlighten our dark mind and teach us about God and heavenly things; he must change and renew our sinful hearts; he must enable us to overcome sin and follow God on earth; and so we shall be prepared for his glory hereafter. Now, Charlie,” she continued, after a little pause, during which Charlie had been looking very thoughtful, “we should earnestly seek to be thus changed; we should earnestly pray for this blessed Spirit; should we not?”

“Yes; and I do ask for God’s Spirit

always in the little prayer that you taught me."

"Yes, dear; but perhaps you have not thought enough of how much we need his help. Our hearts are full of weeds, Charlie, which have to be rooted up,—all evil dispositions, all wrong feelings of every kind; and if they are not rooted up they will grow stronger and stronger, and it will be much harder work to uproot them. And instead of the weeds flowers must be planted, Charlie,—sweet flowers,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and many more. Then we must never leave off praying, and never leave off trying; and we shall *certainly* succeed. God is as willing to make us holy as he is to pardon and accept us."

"I know; and I am going to try."

"That is right, dear Charlie: only keep to that all your life through, and

I need have no fears for you; and at the end will come 'the exceeding great reward,'—the 'inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all who love and serve God.'"

"Heaven,"—said Charlie, softly, "where dear mother is."

"Yes," said Adelaide, gently kissing him, "and where Jesus is, Charlie,—that heavenly Friend who has done every thing for us."

"And where every thing is beautiful," said Charlie, "and nothing makes us unhappy."

"And where we cannot *do wrong* any more," said Adelaide. "I think that will be best of all, Charlie."

"Perhaps it will," said Charlie. "Yes, I think it will," he added, with a thoughtful kiss.

Our young readers may be assured

that all possible amends were made to Miss Stanley ; and they may be assured, likewise, that Charlie's progress in the narrow way became daily more and more sure and decided.

He was but a young pilgrim, it is true ; but it is better far to set out young ; and, though the way is narrow and difficult enough sometimes, there are very bright gates standing open at the end of it, and the traveller who reaches them never repents having set out.

Dear young readers, will not you set out on this way ? It leads to EVER-LASTING LIFE.

THE END.





